BOYS BEST SWIM TIMES

Following are the best Observations beyong swint threst and diving scores. Courte can record updates to Dan O'lesem by fax (734-16), 2144 or enset (734-60-2144) or enset (734-60-2144)

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Ryan Alam (Carton) 23.82

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John Mark Markon (Redord CC) 20.03

Rick Markon (Redord CC) 48.88

Mark Johnson (Salem) 40.70

Adam Faber (N. Farmington) 51.21

Estat Meconia (Redord CC) 50.03

John Markon (Redord CC) 50.03

Rick Markon (Redord CC) 50.03

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Mega officials react to news of Wayne's move to WLAA

BY PAUL BEAUDRY STATE WRITER phenudry@oc.home

Surprise, uncertainty, solidari-

Surprise, uncertainty, solidarity and confusion.
Michigan Mega Conference
officials expressed all those sentiments this week on the news
that Wayne Memorial would
leave the Mega for the Western
Lakes Activities Association as
soon as the 2002-03 school year.
And none could definitively
say whether the move was a
minor bump or the beginning of
defections from the 28-school
learne.

defections from the 28-school league.

"It's a surprise, but it's not a surprise," said Garden City athietic director Bob Dropp. "We had heard that Wayne was exploring the possibility of leaving, but nothing was definite. It was new to everybody because Wayne hadn't said anything to any of us that they were leaving. They're the first one to leave, but there might be some discussions or backroom decisions starting to unfold."

On Monday, the WI.AA

there might be some discussions or backroom decisions starting to unfold."

On Monday, the WLAA announced that the league's principals had unanimously voted to accept Wayne as well as new schools in the Plymouth-Canton and Walled Lake districts as new members.

While change is part of virtually every lengue affiliation at the high school level, it is new to the Mega.

It's been five years since it grow in size and n school has never dropped out — all due to a settlement with the United States Department of Justice and the Department of Education's Office of Clvir Rights, which ruled in 1996 that some districts that had applied to the Mega were excluded because of their large minority enrollment.

We were one of the schools fighting to get in, so I'm very sensitive to this issue, said Williow Run superintendent Gayle Green. But leagues are constantly rerganizing. And if it's done for the right reason — and this certainly sounds like it — then I have no problem with this. The Western Lakes has big-

ANALYSIS

ger schools and Wayne is the third-largest school in our

"But I do hope this isn't some sort of ominous first-step to have something happen to the Mega."

Mega's formation

Mega's formation

The conference began competition in 1993 with 22 members of the Northwest Suburban Activities Association (including Garden City and Redford Union), Wolverine A (including Wayne) and Tri-River Conferences (including Redford Thurston) and Gibraltar Carlson of the Huron League, with plans to expand to 24 schools down the road.

There were immediate problems as some area school districts — specifically those in Romulus and Denborn Heights Robichaud — sucd the league in 1993, claiming they were excluded based on high minority enrollment.

Romulus was admitted to the

de based on high minority enrollment.
Romulus was admitted to the league in 1894 as the 23rd school and dropped its suit against the league. Robichaud, Willow Run, Ypsilanti, Inkster, River Rouge of the Suburban Athletic Conference and independent Country Day applied to fill the final spot. In 1998, the Justice Department ruled that the league must admit the five SAC schools under a consent agreement. Part of the agreement included a clause that the original Mega schools had to stay in the league for "at least five years" — a period that is due to end after this school year.

"I think the best response for us is to seek guidance from the OCR," and Mega attorney Lorie Steinhauer. "This is still under their jurisdiction and we need to check with them before there's any serious action. We don't want to be put into any litigation again."

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sgain."
Steinhauer has contacted the DOJ to clear up concerns she and the league may have over

the definition of "at least five; years," how long the Mega will be under review and if schools are permitted to leave without approval of the Justice Department, but has yet to receive an answer.

answer.
"I have some concerns over "I have some concerns over future review by the Justice Department for these schools if," at some point in time, they elect to leave the Mega," said Steinhauer, who hopes to have some answers before she meets with the lesque's principals and athletic directors at Tuesday's regular meeting.

And the fear that Wayne is just the first school to leave is a real one.

Could other acheals re?

Could other schools go?

Could other schools go?

There have been rumblings of some downriver schools wanting to join another league or leave the Mega and form a new association. But a deterrent from that comes from the league by-laws, which state that if a school-leaves, it can't schedule any competition against Mega members for two years. That forces schools to have a limited non-league schedule or face a healthy increase in its travel budget to fill out its schedule.

"It might open a can of worms," said Dearborn athletic director Dave Mifsud. "You never know how people are going to react. I know we don't have any plans and I haven't heard of other schools planning on leaving."

Wayne left to join its sister school, Westland John Glevn, in the WLAA.

the WLAA.

For most schools though, the Mga concept is working, thanks to a trial and error process.

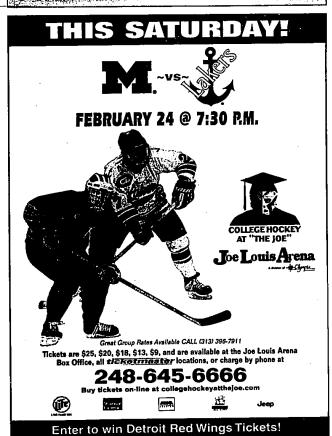
When we went to 28 schools, we tried scheduling a straight 7-7-7 division, based on enrollment and past performance, said Dropp. But we've adjusted that in several sports along the way. Some schools don't have a particular sport and some schools are much stronger than others. We've been tweaking this

Please see MEGA, B8

Raiders finish with dual win

North Farmington ended the dual-meet assaon in boys swimming Thursday with a 97-83 win over visiting Walled battering. The Raiders finished 4-4 in the Western Lakes Activities Association and 4-4 overall.

Adam Farber and Sormet Alver had four first places and though the same and the street of the same and the same



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